DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 025 511 TE 000 958

By- Evans, William H.; Cardone, Michael J.

Specialized Courses in Methods of Teaching English.

National Council of Teachers of English, Champaign, Ill.

Pub Date 64

Note- 40p.

Available from- National Council of Teachers of English, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Ill. 61820 (Stock No. 20701, HC $1.25).

EDRS Price MF- $0.25 HC Not Available from EDRS.

Descriptors- Educational Methods, *English Instruction, *Methods Courses, *Methods Teachers, Preservice Education, Research, Secondary School Teachers, Student Teaching, Teacher Associations, *Teacher Background, *Teacher Education, Teacher Education Curriculum, Teacher Educators, Teacher Evaluation, Teacher Experience, Teacher Participation, Teacher Programs

The results of two studies of methods courses for prospective secondary-school teachers of English are presented in this publication. On the basis of 196 responses to questionnaires (an approximate 33% return), the first study provides information on the academic backgrounds and professional activities of methods teachers, and on the methods courses themselves (including content, instructional materials used, and class size). The second study (based on the responses of 246 instructors, approximately 65% of the total population surveyed) reports information that corroborates and supplements that of the first study. Specific findings discussed include the professional background and teaching assignments of methods instructors; their participation in the National Council of Teachers of English; the relationship of the methods course to student teaching; and the characteristics of methods courses. On the basis of these studies, five recommendations for improving methods courses are presented. (LH)

ED025511

20701

# SPECIALIZED COURSES IN METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH

By William H. Evans
and Michael J. Cardone

TE 000 953

National Council of Teachers of English
508 South Sixth Street • Champaign, Illinois

ED025511

# Specialized Courses

# in

# Methods of Teaching English

**Resolution Passed by the**

**National Council of Teachers of English**

**November 28, 1963**

BACKGROUND: The preparation of the teacher of English is both academic and professional, for it demands both knowledge of the subject—language, literature, and composition—and knowledge of how to teach the subject. There comes a time in the preparation of a teacher of English when academic and pedagogical training must be articulated. According to both research evidence and the testimony of first-year teachers, the most effective articulation takes place in the course in methods of teaching English and from classroom experience as a student teacher of English. Therefore be it

*Resolved,* That the National Council of Teachers of English recommend to all institutions of higher education preparing teachers of English that courses in methods of teaching English and student teaching in English be conducted and supervised by persons qualified in both English and education and that courses in both methods of teaching English and student teaching in English be required for the certification of English teachers.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

# Specialized Courses

# in

# Methods of Teaching

# English

*by*

WILLIAM H. EVANS
MICHAEL J. CARDONE

*and the*

NCTE Committee on the Secondary Methods Course
SISTER MARY SYLVIA, S.S.J., *Chairman*
WILLIAM H. EVANS, *Associate Chairman*

M. AGNELLA GUNN
JOHN HUNTER
ARNOLD LAZARUS
MILACENT OCVIRK
LEO P. RUTH
DAVID STRYKER
ALBERT W. VOGEL
G. ROBERT CARLSEN

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois 61822

**NCTE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS**

James R. Squire, NCTE Executive Secretary, Chairman
Jarvis E. Bush, Wisconsin State College, Oshkosh
Glenn Leggett, University of Washington, Seattle
Virginia M. Reid, Oakland Public Schools, California
Enid M. Olson, NCTE Director of Publications

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL BY MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY NCTE and authors TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

Copyright 1964
National Council of Teachers of English

William H. Evans is assistant professor of secondary and continuing education at the University of Illinois. Michael J. Cardone is a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan.

**Resolution Passed by NCTE College Section and**
**Conference on College Composition and Communication**
**December 26, 1962**

WHEREAS, The College Section and the Conference on College Composition and Communication of the National Council of Teachers of English are concerned with the preparation and certification of teachers of English;

WHEREAS, The preparation of teachers of English is both academic and professional, calling on the one hand for knowledge of the subject—language, literature, and composition—and on the other hand for knowledge of how to teach students language, literature, and composition;

WHEREAS, There comes a time in the preparation of the teacher of English when his work in his subject field and his pedagogical training must be articulated;

WHEREAS, The most effective articulation is achieved in the course in the methods of teaching English;

WHEREAS, This fact is recognized by students who are getting ready to do their student teaching and by teachers who regard the course in English methods as the most valuable of their professional courses;

WHEREAS, Numerous institutions recognize the course in English methods, when taught by a qualified teacher accepted by both the Department of English and the Department of Education, as a course in education required for certification;

WHEREAS, Members of the College Section and the Conference on College Composition and Communication who teach English methods or include this course in their institution's teaching program for majors in English oppose the removal of English methods from the professional sequence leading to certification;

WHEREAS, Members of the College Section and the Conference on College Composition and Communication of the National Council of Teachers of English believe that removing this course lowers standards in the preparation of teachers of English; now therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the College Section and the Conference on College Composition and Communication of the National Council of Teachers of English recommend to all state education agencies and all institutions which prepare teachers that the course in methods of teaching English, credited as work in education and taught by a qualified teacher accepted by the departments of English and education, be an integral part of the professional sequence of the English major and be included among requirements for certification of English teachers.

**Resolutions Adopted at the Allerton Park Conference of College English Chairmen December 2-4, 1962**

**Activities Within the Individual Institution**

. . . .

3. The teaching of English and research in teaching will profit from joint efforts by specialists in English, English education, psychology, and other areas, and from cooperation, wherever this is appropriate, with such agencies as the United States Office of Education, state departments of education, and local schools and school systems.
4. Research in teaching and in the instruction of teachers can contribute to the same ends as a liberal discipline, inasmuch as teaching brings into focus the issues of literary and linguistic theory. Faculty members engaged in research in the teaching of English should be considered eligible for any reduction in teaching loads that is available for those engaged in literary or linguistic research, and the results should be evaluated by criteria comparable to those applied in literary and linguistic disciplines.
5. Teachers of English education should hold appointments in English departments whenever possible.

. . . .

Adopted by eighty college English chairmen or their representatives at the Allerton Park Conference on the Teaching of English

## CONTENTS


INTRODUCTION ..... 1

PART I: THE METHODS COURSE IN SECONDARY ENGLISH.... 3

The Design and Scope of the Study..... 3

The Survey ..... 5

PART II: SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH METHODS COURSES.....13

The Nature and Purpose of the Study.....13

The Design and Scope of the Study.....13

1. Professional Background and Teaching Assignments.....14

2. Participation in the National Council of Teachers of English.....15

3. Relationship of the Methods Course to Student Teaching.....16

4. Characteristics of Methods Courses.....18

Summary .....25

PART III: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION.....27

Conclusion .....29

INDEX .....32

## INTRODUCTION

For several years the National Council of Teachers of English has encouraged study of the preparation of secondary school teachers of English. In 1958, on the recommendation of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee appointed the Commission on the Profession, which during its tenure sought ways to improve the teaching of English methods by sponsoring special workshops for methods teachers. At the completion of its work, this commission strongly recommended further research on English methods courses. The former Commission on the English Curriculum completed its charge in 1963 with the publication of *The Education of Teachers of English for American Schools and Colleges.* Research on the topic had been reported in *The National Interest and the Teaching of English,* a 1961 publication sponsored by the Committee on National Interest. This committee is completing its service to the Council with the publication of *The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English,* scheduled for publication in spring, 1964.

Throughout their study of the profession, these groups have been concerned about the status of the methods courses for prospective teachers of English in secondary schools. Some of the highlights presented in the 1961 *National Interest* report can be summarized as follows:

Only 75 percent of 374 responding institutions offer special work in the methods of teaching English in secondary school.
Even when offered, the course is not always required of the English major planning to teach.
Students in English methods courses spend more time on the teaching of literature than on the teaching of grammar and the teaching of composition combined.
Many English majors go into the methods course with little or no preparation in advanced composition, world literature, literary criticism, literature for adolescents, literary genres, contemporary literature, the history of the English language, and grammar based on recent linguistic principles.

Information gathered for the *National Interest* report supports the belief of several Council groups that many English majors go into the methods course with little or no preparation in areas of English vital to the teaching of English, and that the English methods course, as presently taught, could be one weak link in the professional preparation of secondary English teachers.

In response to requests for further research, the Executive Committee appointed in 1962 a Committee on the Secondary Methods Course and instructed the members to gather further data on present course offerings. The first section of this report contains the preliminary findings of the committee. The second section, giving data from a doctoral dissertation by Michael Cardone, provides additional information. The concluding section offers recommendations for improving the specialized course in methods of teaching English. These recommendations stem from data revealed by the two studies, from additional comments and suggestions volunteered by respondents in the first study, and from three years of related study and discussion by members of the Committee on the Secondary Methods Course.

# PART I

# THE METHODS COURSE IN SECONDARY ENGLISH[1]

## The Design and Scope of the Study

This study involves the distribution of three questionnaires and the analysis of data as outlined in three steps below.

*First Step: First questionnaire sent in May, 1962*

At the outset of this study, when the committee felt the need for a comprehensive and up-to-date list of instructors in colleges and universities who were solely or primarily responsible for teaching English methods courses, it sent a one-page questionnaire to 1,276 institutions. Data received are summarized below. Thus, this questionnaire, while not providing much data, served to identify 569 instructors for two extensive surveys to follow.

**Data Received from the First Questionnaire**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number questionnaires sent | | | 1276 |
| Number institutions offering separate course in methods | | | 402 |
| Number instructors teaching these courses | | | 569 |
| Number institutions not offering separate course | | | 174 |
| Number who did not respond | | | 700 |
| Course assignments by departments: | | Yes | No |
| Is (are) the person(s) permanently assigned to the course? | | 84% | 16% |
| Does the assignment revolve among different persons in the department? | | 17% | 83% |
| Is the course offered in English, education, or in a joint program sponsored by both departments? | English | 26% | |
| | Education | 50% | |
| | Joint Programs | 24% | |

The data above show that 45 percent of the institutions responded to the first questionnaire. Approximately 200, or one-third of the 576 institutions responding, reported no separate course in English methods. Of these, however, 42, or 21 percent, indicated that English majors took only a general methods course. Separate courses in English methods were offered in 402 institutions. *Patterson's American Education* for 1962-63, an annual directory of American schools and colleges, includes

[1]Report of a study by William H. Evans and the Committee on the Secondary Methods Course, whose members are listed on the title page of this book.

only 459 institutions in its special listing of colleges and universities offering programs in teacher education.[2] The assumption seems warranted, therefore, that the 444 institutions reporting either general methods courses or separate courses in English methods include most of the teacher training institutions in the country. Data above indicate that instructors of English methods tend to be assigned permanently to the courses. About three-fourths of all separate English methods courses in this study are identified with education, being offered by schools of education or through cooperative arrangements between English and education departments. Apparently, all such courses, regardless of the department which offers them, are identified by name with the subject "English."

*Second Step: Second questionnaire sent in June, 1962*

The second questionnaire, sent to the 569 instructors on the new mailing list, made specific inquiries about these items:

1. The title and content of each methods course.
2. Texts and supplementary materials used.
3. Students taking the course.
4. The manner in which the course is scheduled.
5. The instructor's assessment of the course.
6. The instructor's recommendations for improving the course.
7. The instructor's feelings about the importance of secondary school experience and professional identification with the field of secondary school English.

*Third Step: Third questionnaire sent in September, 1962*

The third and final questionnaire was sent to the same instructors with the second questionnaire enclosed for those who had not responded. The final questionnaire requested this specific information:

1. The academic background of each instructor.
2. The professional experience background of each instructor.
3. The professional activities and affiliations of each instructor.
4. Publications by each related to the teaching of high school English.

Space was also provided for free comments covering any points respondents did not have a chance to make in answering the questions on all three questionnaires. The only direction given to guide these comments was a request for information on research relating to methods and the teaching of methods.

The end of October was the deadline for accepting all questionnaires.

---

[2] *Patterson's American Education* (Mount Prospect, Illinois: Educational Directories, Inc., 1962), pp. 639-646.

By this time 196 respondents had sent both the second and the third questionnaires, thus constituting the population for the major part of this study. All responses that could be assigned categories and weights were keyed, transferred to grids, subsequently punched on IBM cards, and sorted. All statements (reactions, course descriptions, suggestions, free comments, etc.) were read by the researcher. Same or very similar statements were noted and ranked by frequency. The following pages present much of these data in topical outline.

## The Survey

### *Types of Institutions Involved in the Survey*

The 196 instructors involved in this study teach English methods courses at the following types of institutions:

| | |
|---|---|
| Private liberal arts college | 37% |
| State university | 23% |
| State college | 17% |
| Private university | 13% |
| State teachers college | 6% |
| City college | 3% |
| Private teachers college | 1% |

### *Academic Background of Instructors*

**Academic Background through the Master's Degree**

| | *English* | *Social Studies* | *Speech* | *Journalism* | *Library Science* | *Others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Major field in baccalaureate | 78% | 8% | .... | 1% | .... | 13% |
| Minor field in baccalaureate | 15% | 34% | 8% | 1% | 1% | 41% |
| Major field in master's | 71% | 2% | 1% | .... | .... | 26% |
| Minor field in master's | 45% | 10% | 1% | .... | .... | 44% |

42% of all instructors in this study have a master's degree only.

• Of the 42 percent with a master's degree only, what percent have a doctoral program under way? Are more seeking a Ph.D. or an Ed.D.?

Only about one-fourth of the instructors with a master's degree indicate a doctorate under way.

Slightly over one-half (54%) of those with a doctorate under way have chosen the Ph.D. The rest (46%) have chosen the Ed.D.

One-half of the Ph.D. candidates have chosen to combine English and education. The other half have chosen to work in English only.

All Ed.D. candidates have chosen to combine English and education in their programs.

• Of the 58 percent with a doctorate, what percent have the Ph.D. and Ed.D., and to what extent have all identified English, English education, and education in their doctoral programs?

About three-fourths have the Ph.D. ..... 76%
About one-fourth have the Ed.D. ..... 24%
Ph.D. holders with a major in English in the doctorate ..... 71%
Of these, 61% have no minor, 10% have English, 10% a foreign language, 7% education, and the rest mainly philosophy and history.
Ph.D. holders with a major in English education in the doctorate ..... 18%
Of these, 55% have a minor in English.
Ph.D. holders with a major in education in the doctorate ..... 11%
Of these, 62% have a minor in English.
Ed.D. holders with a major in English or English education in the doctorate ..... 59%
Of these, 55% have a minor in education, 37% have no minor, and the others are in English and reading.
Ed.D. holders with a major in education in the doctorate ..... 41%
Of these, 50% have a minor in English or English education, with a slight leaning toward straight English; the others are about evenly divided between no minor and one in education.

• How much training have all instructors had in several areas of the language arts which are considered to be especially important in view of recent trends and innovations in teaching English in the secondary schools?

The *National Interest* report of 1961 reveals that many students who take English methods have had little or no training in literature for adolescents, advanced composition, modern grammar based on recent linguistic principles, the history of the English language, and world literature. The *National Interest* survey also reveals that "more time is spent in methods courses on the teaching of literature than on the teaching of grammar and the teaching of composition combined." The present study has made some inquiry into the training of instructors in some of these neglected areas. In the table below, instructors indicated their training by actual courses taken, courses taught, and continued reading.

| *Areas important in view of recent trends* | *Have taken some course work* | *Have taught* | *Have kept informed through reading* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Literature for adolescents | 5% | 9% | 32% |
| Structural linguistics | 10% | 1% | 48% |
| Historical linguistics | 24% | 2% | 30% |
| Advanced composition | 16% | 8% | 14% |
| Teaching of reading | 8% | 5% | 28% |
| World literature | 17% | 6% | 13% |

*Professional Backgrounds and Recent Professional Activities and Affiliations of Instructors*

What is the professional background (teaching and supervising, etc.) of instructors in the language arts in elementary school through college? What percent hold certificates to teach English in grades 7 through 12? How much importance do the instructors assign to high school teaching experience? What *direct* working contacts have instructors made within the past two or three years with English teachers in the secondary schools? What are the professional affiliations of instructors? How much importance do instructors assign to a very strong identity with secondary English professionally?

- What *direct* working contacts have instructors had within the past two or three years with English teachers in the secondary schools?

| | |
|---|---|
| Talks to secondary English teachers in institutes, workshops, conferences, etc. | 69% |
| Personal supervision and evaluation of teaching of student English teachers | 61% |
| Close contact with teachers in helping them in their efforts improve the English curriculum | 52% |
| Teaching extension classes and other inservice groups away from campus | 31% |
| Conducting research through close cooperation with English teachers | 25% |
| Other contacts | 30% |

- What are the professional affiliations of instructors?

| | |
|---|---|
| National Council of Teachers of English | 70% |
| A statewide English group | 68% |
| Conference on College Composition and Communication | 33% |
| A local (city or county) English group | 28% |
| Modern Language Association | 24% |
| International Reading Association | 13% |
| Others | 29% |

- How important is it for the instructor to identify himself professionally as having a strong, even primary, interest in the teaching of high school English?

| | |
|---|---|
| Essential | 50% |
| Very important | 32% |
| Important | 15% |
| Makes no difference | 2% |
| Not desirable | 1% |

• What is the professional background of instructors from elementary school through college?

**Professional Background of 196 Instructors According to Ranges of Years. Percent with at Least Some Experience Also Indicated***

| *Professional experience* | *Ranges of years* 0–5 | 6–10 | 11–15 | 16–20 | Over 20 | *Percent with some experience* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching in the elementary grades (1-6) | 86% | 10% | 2% | 2% | ..... | 30% |
| Teaching English in junior high (7-8) | 72% | 16% | 4% | 8% | ..... | 48 |
| Teaching English in senior high (9-12) | 38% | 28% | 15% | 12% | 7% | 86 |
| Heading an English dept in a jr-sr high | 53% | 21% | 15% | 6% | 5% | 38 |
| Teaching English in a jr college (13-14) | 80% | 9% | ..... | 11% | ..... | 11 |
| Teaching English in a coll or univ | 31% | 23% | 19% | 16% | 11% | 66 |
| Heading an English dept in a coll or univ | 61% | 21% | 15% | 3% | ..... | 33 |
| Teaching English methods courses | 56% | 21% | 10% | 6% | 7% | 76 |
| Teaching education courses other than English education | 44% | 31% | 7% | 7% | 11% | 32 |
| Supervising an English program in a local or state system | 75% | 25% | ..... | ..... | ..... | 6 |
| Experience not included above | 60% | 10% | 14% | 2% | 14% | 23% |

*Note: The column at the far right shows that most instructors have had some experience as high school English teachers and very few as system supervisors. The center columns show what percentage of those *with at least some experience* fall into certain ranges.

• What percent hold certificates to teach English in grades 7 through 12?

| | |
|---|---|
| Hold certificate | 71% |
| Do not | 29% |

• How important is it for the instructor of English methods courses to have experience teaching English in secondary schools?

| | |
|---|---|
| Essential | 64% |
| Very important | 23% |
| Important | 9% |
| Makes no difference | 3% |
| Not desirable | 1% |

• How many instructors have written scholarly articles and/or text materials which are directly related to the teaching of English in the secondary schools? (Exclusive of dissertations, theses, curriculum guides, etc.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of the 196 instructors who have published materials as described above | 73 |
| Ph.D. holders who have published | 45% |
| Ph.D. holders who have not | 55% |
| Ed.D. holders who have published | 56% |
| Ed.D. holders who have not | 44% |
| Master's holders who have published | 16% |
| Master's holders who have not | 84% |

*The Methods Courses*

Who may take English methods? What titles are given to the courses? At what year academically are most of the students? Are there more females than males taking the courses? What is the average class size? How extensive is the use of texts and supplementary reading materials? What is the content of methods courses? What strengths, weaknesses, and problems about teaching methods do instructors recognize as significant? What recommendations do instructors offer for improving the course and the teaching of the course?

• Who may take English methods?

| | |
|---|---|
| English majors only | 23% |
| Majors and minors only | 42% |
| Anyone may take | 35% |

• What titles are given to the courses?

Respondents were asked to list the titles of all courses considered to be specifically English methods courses. Two hundred and five titles were reported, exclusive of such vague ones as "English 200" and "Education 73." It is interesting to note that 101 *different* titles were submitted. Titles most often reported are listed below in order of frequency with percent of 205 noted for each.

| *Course Titles* | *Frequency* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|
| Teaching of English in the Secondary School | 21 | 12% |
| Teaching of English | 16 | 8 |
| Teaching of High School English | 15 | 7 |
| Methods of Teaching English in Secondary Schools | 9 | 4 |
| Methods of Teaching English | 7 | 3 |
| English Methods | 7 | 3 |

Only 18 titles, or 9 percent, gave any indication of the specific subject matter taught, and most of these were titles for courses in single areas of the language arts—composition, grammar, reading, and literature. In view of the vast number of topics attempted by methods instructors, few titles identify only one or two areas of subject matter. Most indicate an attempt at general coverage of topics in the teaching of English in the secondary schools. The overwhelming tendency is to include the word *English* in the title. The few courses focusing on specific aspects of the subject matter of English were, for the most part, offered in addition to one main English methods course.

- At what year academically are most of the students? What is the average class size? Are more females than males enrolled?

| | |
|---|---|
| Freshman | 1% |
| Sophomore | 6% |
| Junior | 30% |
| Senior | 42% |
| Graduate | 26% |
| Average class size | 32 students |
| Female | 70% |
| Male | 30% |

- How extensive is the use of texts and supplementary reading materials?

Although 36 different books are listed as texts, 7 of these account for 72 percent of all texts used. Two books alone account for 41 percent of all texts used.

A number [illegible] instructors (15%) assign no text but use professional books on reserve in the library and a bibliography to direct and encourage wide reading in various professional publications.

Seventy-one different sources are listed as supplementary sources, but only four of these constitute 72 percent of all supplementary reading. These are the *English Journal* (15%), three methods books which also rank high as texts (20%), bibliographies and books on reserve (22%), and NCTE books, booklets, and pamphlets (15%).

The remaining 28 percent of all supplementary sources are for the most part mentioned only once or twice, with the only noticeable trend being the fairly wide use of paperback editions of novels, short stories, and poetry.

- What is the content of the English methods courses?

Respondents were given space on the second questionnaire to describe or list what the courses contain. Response was good; in fact, 188, more than 95 percent, submitted course descriptions. Fourteen respond-

ents even included extensive outlines attached to the questionnaire. The researcher read all course descriptions carefully, noted the frequency of topics mentioned, and computed the following data:

**Course Content as Identified by 188 (95%) of the Instructors Involved**

| *Topics Identified* | *Number* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|
| Teaching literature (apparently with the main stress on literary types) | 140 | 74% |
| Teaching composition | 131 | 70 |
| Teaching grammar (mainly "functional" and "basic") | 102 | 54 |
| Constructing units and lesson plans (actual practice in this) | 77 | 40 |
| Teaching of reading (developmental and/or remedial) | 58 | 30 |
| Constructing tests, using standardized tests, evaluating progress | 41 | 22 |
| Teaching oral communication skills | 41 | 22 |
| Presenting aims, overview, backgrounds of teaching secondary English | 36 | 19 |
| Teaching listening skills | 34 | 18 |
| Considering the "new" grammars (some teach it to methods classes) | 31 | 16 |
| Teaching spelling | 27 | 14 |
| Considering the professional role of the English teacher | 26 | 14 |
| Considering current issues, trends, and innovations | 24 | 13 |
| Teaching English usage | 21 | 11 |
| Teaching vocabulary and word study | 20 | 11 |
| Using the library and source materials | 19 | 10 |
| Teaching punctuation | 15 | 8 |
| Co-curricular responsibilities | 10 | 5 |
| Considering semantics | 10 | 5 |
| Grouping and individual differences | 10 | 5 |
| Literature for adolescents | 7 | 3 |
| Use of audiovisual aids | 7 | 3 |
| Teaching straight, critical, and imaginative thinking | 6 | 3 |
| Considering research in the secondary language arts | 4 | 2 |
| Teaching journalism and working with the high school newspaper | 3 | 2 |

Other topics mentioned, but only slightly, are discipline and classroom management, oral interpretation of literature, study skills, drama, censorship, integration of the language arts, outlining, diction, history of the English language, use of the dictionary, and conducting class discussions.

## PART II

# SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH METHODS COURSES[1]

### The Nature and Purpose of the Study

One area of English which needs careful study is the English methods course, a phase of English teacher preparation deemed so important that a large share of the 1963 Conference on English Education at Indiana University was devoted to it. Yet, surprisingly little is known nationally about the English methods course. Dora V. Smith stated this aptly in her summary address at the conference when she remarked, ". . . it is too bad we have so little research and so little knowledge of research in English methods."

The preceding chapter by William H. Evans and the Committee on the Secondary Methods Course represents the first significant research in English methods as an entity rather than as an adjunct to the total preparation of secondary English teachers. It is an important supplement to the information gathered for the *National Interest* report of 1961. The data reported here are taken from the investigator's doctoral thesis, nearing completion at the University of Michigan. From this dissertation, information which supplements the committee report is reported below. Other data in this study corroborate information reported by the Committee on the Secondary Methods Course, but duplicate findings have been omitted.

### The Design and Scope of the Study

The study made use of a questionnaire designed to be as comprehensive as possible, while still allowing for a reasonable time limit for completion by respondents. From the list of 569 instructors of English methods in colleges and universities in the United States, obtained from data gathered by Evans, the writer selected a random sampling of 380, roughly two-thirds of the total, and sent a questionnaire on September 20, 1962. By the deadline date, a month later, 278, or approximately 73 percent had responded. Of those questionnaires returned, 32 were not usable for one reason or another. The number of respondents reported here is 246, or approximately 65 percent of the total population surveyed.

Results from the questionnaire may be summarized in the following four categories:

[1]Report of a study by Michael J. Cardone.

1. Professional background and teaching assignments.
2. Membership and participation in NCTE.
3. Relationship of the methods course to student teaching.
4. Characteristics of English methods courses.

The data gathered from the questionnaires were processed and transferred to IBM cards. A program was then designed for use with the IBM 7090 which permits the writer to correlate any variable in this study with any other in either single or multiple correlations. This report, however, presents the data in topical outline and deals with only those findings which amplify or supplement data in the preceding section.

### 1. The Professional Background and Teaching Assignments of Methods Instructors

**Key Findings**

The overwhelming majority of English methods instructors have had experience in secondary school teaching. Over 90 percent have taught English at this level. More than 80 percent have or have had regular teaching certificates.

Nearly 60 percent of the methods instructors hold the rank of Associate Professor or Full Professor.

Although in half the cases methods courses are offered solely by schools of education (see preceding chapter, page 3), slightly more than half the instructors in these courses hold appointments only in departments of English.

Several questions in the survey sought information on the experience and the education of the teachers of English methods. Among the data not revealed in the Evans report is the fact that, of the respondents, 124, or 50.5 percent, are male, and 122, or 49.5 percent, are female. The median age reported is 48 years. An accurate figure is not available since several respondents gave their ages as "30 plus."

Of the total number of respondents, 205, or 83.3 percent, have or have had secondary school teaching certificates, and 41, or 16.7 percent, have not. Of the 205 who hold certificates, twelve do not have English as a major, though four of the twelve have English as a certification minor. The teaching experience of respondents ranges variously from elementary schools through universities, but this report is concerned with only those who have taught English in the secondary school. Of the 246 respondents, 226, or 91.9 percent, have taught secondary school English, and only 20, or 8.1 percent, have not. This information indicates that an overwhelming majority of English methods instructors have some firsthand knowledge of actual secondary school teaching. A large number, however, had this experience only briefly and some years ago. Subsequent study would be necessary to determine the effect of recency or length of teaching experi-

ence in schools on what and how instructors teach their classes in English methods.

The administrative experience of the respondents varies widely; 138, or 56.1 percent, had had some kind of administrative experience from elementary school through the university. The positions most often mentioned were principals, department heads, deans, and supervisors. One hundred and eight, or 43.9 percent, of the respondents had had no administrative experience.

One question in the survey dealt with the present appointments of the respondents. The English methods instructors represented in this study presently hold the following positions:

| *Position* | *Number* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|
| Teaching fellow | 0 | 0.0% |
| Instructor | 29 | 11.8 |
| Lecturer | 6 | 2.4 |
| Assistant professor | 58 | 23.6 |
| Associate professor | 72 | 29.3 |
| Full professor | 71 | 28.9 |
| Other (all high school teachers) | 10 | 4.1 |

**Department in Which Position Is Held**

| *Department* | *Number* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|
| Education | 68 | 27.6% |
| English | 127 | 51.6 |
| English and education (joint) | 44 | 17.9 |
| Other | 6 | 2.4 |
| No answer | 1 | 0.4 |

These instructors teach courses of every kind in English and in education in addition to a course in English methods; their average class load is 13 hours, high for college teaching. Included in this load is compensatory time for the supervision of student teachers.

### 2. Participation in the National Council of Teachers of English

Only 76.1 percent of the English methods instructors are members of NCTE, but 100 percent read one or more NCTE publications.

The study summarized in Part I reported that 79 percent of the respondents are members of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Responses to Section 3 of the questionnaire in this study give additional information concerning the relation of the respondent to NCTE. As the national subject matter organization for teachers of English, NCTE keeps its members informed about current scholarly and professional developments which should influence teachers. Information about the extent to which methods instructors maintain close and continuing contacts with professional leaders in the field was sought through questions on this portion of the study.

Of this sampling of 246 respondents, 187, or 76.1 percent, are NCTE members; 38, or 15.4 percent, are not; and 21, or 8.5 percent, failed to indicate one way or the other. However, 246, or 100 percent, report that they regularly read one or more of the publications of the NCTE. A total of 48, or 19.5 percent, indicated that they always attend NCTE meetings; 104, or 42.3 percent, sometimes attend; 33, or 13.4 percent, rarely attend; 55, or 22.4 percent, never attend; and 6, or 2.4 percent, did not respond to the item. Sixty-eight, or 27.6 percent, indicated that they submit articles for publication in NCTE periodicals; 163, or 66.3 percent, do not submit articles; and 15, or 6.1 percent, did not reply. In summary, 123, or 50 percent, said that generally they were actively involved with the NCTE in some way; 111, or 45.1 percent, said they were not; and 12, or 4.9 percent, did not answer.

### 3. Relationship of the Methods Course to Student Teaching

**Key Findings**

Only 54.1 percent of the English methods instructors supervise student teaching in English, but 75.1 percent believe in supervision by English methods instructors.

In 22 percent of the institutions the methods course is offered concurrently with student teaching; in 52.4 percent of the institutions, the course precedes student teaching.

Only 47.1 percent of the instructors know the methods course as being "very closely" related to student teaching.

Section 3 concerns itself with the relationship between English methods courses and student teaching in English. It necessarily involves, therefore, the relationships of the universities and colleges with the secondary schools. An encouraging though still small number of the respondents, 133, or 54.1 percent, indicated that they do supervise student teachers; 112, or 45.5 percent, do not supervise student teachers; and 1, or 0.4 percent, failed to respond to the question. Of the 133 who do

supervise, 116, or 87.2 percent supervise student teachers in English, and 17, or 12.8 percent, supervise student teachers in all subjects. Further, these instructors supervise from one to 50 students a year, with a median of 20 students, in laboratory schools and cooperating public or parochial schools. They spend from one to 40 hours a week with a median of 12 hours, and they travel up to 500 miles a week with a median of 100 miles in performing their supervisory functions. In spite of the enormity of this task in view of the total teaching load, 185, or 75.1 percent, of all respondents answered *Yes* when asked if they thought English methods instructors actually *should* supervise student teachers in English; 10, or 4.1 percent, said that the English methods instructor should *not* supervise; 29, or 11.8 percent were undecided; 10 more, or 4.1 percent were indifferent; and 12, or 4.8 percent, did not respond to the question. Of the total, 223 or 90.6 percent, have at least some relationship with the student teacher in English, and 23, or 9.4 percent, have no relationship. These relationships fall into the major categories of undergraduate or graduate adviser, counselor, and writer of recommendations.

When the respondents were asked about the timing of English methods courses relative to student teachers, 54, or 22 percent, indicated that methods and student teaching were taken concurrently; 129, or 52.4 percent, indicated that English methods preceded student teaching; 2, or 0.8 percent, said that student teaching preceded the methods course; and 1, or 0.4 percent, failed to respond. The remaining 60, or 24.4 percent, answered that there was no specified time for taking the methods course, but that it could be taken before, after, or during student teaching.

Finally, the respondents were asked to indicate how closely allied the English methods course was to the program of student teaching at their school and, further, to comment on their answer if they wished. The results are as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very closely | 116 | or | 47.1% |
| Somewhat closely | 71 | or | 28.9% |
| Not very closely | 57 | or | 23.2% |
| No answer | 2 | or | 0.8% |

Many instructors commented that they would like to see the methods course in English and the program of student teaching in English more closely allied. The reasons most often given for disparities by those instructors (52.1 percent) who answered "somewhat closely" or "not very closely" were lack of liaison between departments, lack of interest, time, or initiative by instructors and administrators involved.

## 4. Characteristics of Methods Courses

**Key Findings**

Minimum grade-point averages are stipulated for admission to methods courses in 67.8 percent of all institutions, but 74.2 percent report this average to be as low as "C" *in all* subjects.

Prerequisites in English are required by 77.2 percent of all institutions; prerequisites in education are required by 65.9 percent.

Much stress is placed in methods courses on the teaching of composition, literature, and language. Little stress is placed on reading, speech, and mass media.

The next section of the questionnaire dealt exclusively with the English methods course which the respondents teach. The first question asked if students enrolling in the English methods course must satisfy requirements with respect to grade-point average. The respondents answered as follows:

**Minimum Grade Average Required as Prerequisite to Methods Course**

| *Answer* | *Number* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 167 | 67.8% |
| No | 70 | 28.5 |
| No answer | 9 | 3.7 |

Of the 167 who answered *Yes,* the following minimum grades were given:

| | *A* | | *B* | | *C* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* |
| In all subjects | 0 | 0.0% | 10 | 5.9% | 124 | 74.2% |
| In English | 0 | 0.0 | 36 | 21.6 | 79 | 47.2 |

Those of the 167 who failed to respond for a grade "in all subjects" numbered 33, or 19.9 percent. Those who did not give an answer for a minimum grade in English were 52, or 31.2 percent. In most of the cases where no answer was given, the respondents noted that they did not know exactly what the grade-point requirements were, but they knew such requirements did exist. Some institutions follow the practice of requiring a "C plus" average rather than a "C." The distinction between "C" and "C plus" was not made on the questionnaire.

When the English methods course precedes student teaching, a minimum grade in the methods course is a prerequisite for student teaching in 109, or 44.3 percent, of the cases. In 96, or 39.0 percent of the cases, it is not; 41, or 16.7 percent, failed to respond. This particular minimum grade was not asked for, but with few exceptions, the 109 respondents who answered *Yes* stated that the minimum grade was "C."

Fifty-six, or 22.8 percent, of the respondents indicated that there were no English courses prerequisite to the course in English methods. Of the 190, or 77.2 percent, who indicated prerequisite courses, all mentioned composition and varying numbers of hours in the history of the English language, period courses in both English and American literature, and genre courses. No one mentioned rhetoric and logic; only a very few mentioned specific courses in adolescent literature; only a few more than that indicated courses in usage and diction.

Eighty-four, or 34.1 percent, of the instructors reported no prerequisites in education. Of the 162, or 65.9 percent, who indicated prerequisites to the English methods course, all 162 mentioned educational psychology and the philosophy of education, and slightly over 25 percent mentioned a general methods course.

A question was then asked which was designed to find out if the English methods instructor knew of any similarities between his own methods course and any other course, and to what he attributed the similarities. A total of 151, or 61.4 percent, knew of no similarities; and 95, or 38.6 percent, attributed similarities they knew of to emulation, observation, teaching assistantships, textbook suggestions, and departmental decision.

The next several sections made use of checklists which were designed to reveal the relative emphasis which methods instructors place on various aspects of content and methodology. For example, respondents were asked to respond to the question, "Which of the following methods do you rely upon in your teaching of the English methods course?" In the question, "often" was defined as at least once a week, "sometimes" as eight to ten times a semester, and "rarely" as fewer than eight times a semester. The responses to several such questions are presented in the tables on pages 20-25.

Although the information that follows seems to vary substantially from that in William Evans' report on content in English methods (see page 11), the difference stems not from the sampling but from the form of the question. The previous study called for free response to an open question. In this survey, the questionnaire provided extensive checklists

which went into considerable detail and which dealt separately with content, with methods to be stressed, with skills to be taught, etc.

*Frequency of Methods Employed in Teaching the Methods Course*

| Methods Employed | Frequency: Often | | Sometimes | | Rarely | | Never | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Informal group discussion | 174 | 70.8 | 63 | 25.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 2.0 | 4 | 1.6 |
| Source readings | 134 | 54.5 | 70 | 28.5 | 14 | 5.6 | 3 | 1.2 | 25 | 10.2 |
| Current materials study | 129 | 52.4 | 70 | 28.5 | 15 | 6.1 | 1 | 0.4 | 31 | 12.6 |
| Lecture | 105 | 42.7 | 85 | 34.6 | 42 | 17.0 | 5 | 2.0 | 9 | 3.7 |
| Demonstrations | 80 | 32.5 | 89 | 36.2 | 34 | 13.8 | 17 | 6.9 | 26 | 10.6 |
| Unit method | 78 | 31.6 | 70 | 28.5 | 29 | 11.8 | 24 | 9.8 | 45 | 18.3 |
| Pupil-teacher planning | 64 | 26.0 | 83 | 33.7 | 40 | 16.3 | 20 | 8.1 | 39 | 15.9 |
| Individual reports | 63 | 25.6 | 119 | 48.4 | 44 | 17.9 | 4 | 1.6 | 16 | 6.5 |
| Recitation | 49 | 19.9 | 79 | 32.1 | 51 | 20.7 | 24 | 9.8 | 43 | 17.5 |
| Audiovisual aids | 25 | 10.2 | 100 | 40.6 | 82 | 33.3 | 11 | 4.5 | 28 | 11.4 |
| Group reports | 23 | 9.3 | 93 | 37.8 | 61 | 24.8 | 26 | 10.6 | 43 | 17.5 |
| "Core" practices | 12 | 4.9 | 28 | 11.4 | 53 | 21.5 | 71 | 28.9 | 82 | 33.3 |
| Excursions | 9 | 3.7 | 31 | 12.6 | 63 | 25.6 | 92 | 37.4 | 51 | 20.7 |
| Supervised study | 7 | 2.8 | 26 | 10.6 | 27 | 11.0 | 125 | 50.8 | 61 | 24.8 |
| Outside speakers | 6 | 2.4 | 54 | 22.0 | 104 | 42.3 | 48 | 19.5 | 34 | 13.8 |
| Sociodrama | 5 | 2.0 | 13 | 5.3 | 48 | 19.5 | 121 | 49.2 | 59 | 24.0 |

• What emphasis do you place on the following methods of teaching which you discuss in your class?

| Method | Much | | Some | | None | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| How to construct and teach a unit | 149 | 60.6 | 80 | 32.5 | 4 | 1.6 | 13 | 5.3 |
| How to conduct classroom discussion | 140 | 56.9 | 93 | 37.8 | 5 | 2.0 | 8 | 3.3 |
| How to prepare a lesson plan | 129 | 52.4 | 95 | 38.6 | 11 | 4.5 | 11 | 4.5 |
| How to conduct classroom recitation | 99 | 40.2 | 114 | 46.3 | 17 | 6.9 | 16 | 6.5 |
| How to organize, conduct, and evaluate individual reports | 68 | 26.8 | 132 | 61.8 | 11 | 4.5 | 17 | 6.9 |
| How to organize and use pupil-teacher planning | 53 | 21.5 | 140 | 56.9 | 30 | 12.2 | 23 | 9.3 |
| How to organize, conduct, and evaluate group reports | 52 | 21.1 | 140 | 56.9 | 32 | 13.0 | 22 | 8.9 |
| How to lecture | 21 | 8.5 | 110 | 44.7 | 71 | 28.9 | 44 | 17.9 |

• What emphasis do you place upon the following areas of content which are included in your course?

| Area | Much | | Some | | None | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Methods and techniques of teaching English | 213 | 86.6 | 33 | 13.4 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Determination of objectives | 157 | 63.8 | 87 | 35.4 | 1 | 0.4 | 1 | 0.4 |
| Nature of English (language and literature) | 137 | 55.7 | 93 | 37.8 | 7 | 2.8 | 9 | 3.7 |
| Content of high school English courses | 135 | 54.9 | 99 | 40.2 | 5 | 2.0 | 7 | 2.8 |
| Unit planning | 105 | 42.7 | 115 | 46.7 | 11 | 4.5 | 15 | 6.1 |
| Curriculum patterns in English | 95 | 38.6 | 138 | 56.1 | 6 | 2.4 | 7 | 2.8 |
| Psychological background of students | 95 | 38.6 | 119 | 48.4 | 13 | 5.3 | 19 | 7.7 |
| English course content materials | 92 | 37.4 | 136 | 55.3 | 3 | 1.2 | 15 | 6.1 |
| Academic capabilities of students | 85 | 34.6 | 105 | 42.7 | 3 | 1.2 | 53 | 21.5 |
| Professional growth of teachers | 79 | 32.1 | 132 | 53.7 | 16 | 6.5 | 19 | 7.7 |
| Articulation between English courses | 70 | 28.5 | 138 | 56.1 | 18 | 7.3 | 20 | 8.1 |
| Evaluation (testing) | 63 | 25.6 | 171 | 69.5 | 7 | 2.8 | 5 | 2.0 |
| Remedial reading | 61 | 24.8 | 118 | 48.0 | 22 | 8.9 | 45 | 18.3 |
| Rapid learners (advanced placement, etc.) | 59 | 24.0 | 133 | 54.1 | 6 | 2.4 | 48 | 19.5 |
| Slow learners | 51 | 20.7 | 142 | 57.7 | 8 | 3.3 | 45 | 18.3 |
| Classroom management | 49 | 19.9 | 145 | 58.9 | 36 | 14.6 | 16 | 6.5 |
| Sociological background of students | 48 | 19.5 | 127 | 51.6 | 17 | 6.9 | 54 | 22.0 |
| Economic background of students | 35 | 14.2 | 131 | 53.5 | 23 | 9.3 | 57 | 23.2 |
| Historical development of English methods | 33 | 13.4 | 105 | 42.7 | 91 | 37.0 | 17 | 6.9 |
| Audiovisual aids | 25 | 10.2 | 199 | 80.9 | 10 | 4.1 | 12 | 4.9 |
| Handling controversial issues | 25 | 10.2 | 166 | 67.5 | 27 | 11.0 | 28 | 11.4 |
| Utilizing community resources | 25 | 10.2 | 162 | 65.9 | 37 | 15.0 | 22 | 8.9 |
| Articulation with other courses | 24 | 9.8 | 85 | 34.6 | 16 | 6.5 | 121 | 49.2 |

• What emphasis do you place on the following English teacher skills?

The findings with respect to the content and methodology of the English methods course indicate the broad range of topics with which the methods course must deal. Great emphasis in such courses is placed on constructing units and lesson plans (60.6 percent and 52.4 percent of respondents report "much" emphasis), whereas comparatively little em-

phasis is placed on pupil-teacher planning and on group and individual reporting (only 21.1 percent to 26.8 percent report "much emphasis").

| Skills | Much | | Some | | None | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| How to teach language and usage | 174 | 70.7 | 68 | 27.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 1.6 |
| How to teach expository writing | 166 | 67.5 | 73 | 29.7 | 1 | 0.4 | 6 | 2.4 |
| How to teach poetry | 146 | 59.3 | 95 | 38.6 | 2 | 0.8 | 3 | 1.2 |
| How to grade themes | 141 | 57.3 | 95 | 38.6 | 5 | 2.0 | 5 | 2.0 |
| How to correct themes | 140 | 56.9 | 91 | 37.0 | 3 | 1.2 | 12 | 4.9 |
| How to teach fiction (short story and novel) | 138 | 56.1 | 101 | 41.1 | 4 | 1.6 | 3 | 1.2 |
| How to teach descriptive grammar | 119 | 48.4 | 104 | 42.3 | 8 | 3.3 | 15 | 6.1 |
| How to teach critical thinking | 106 | 43.1 | 119 | 48.4 | 8 | 3.3 | 13 | 5.3 |
| How to teach drama | 104 | 42.3 | 127 | 51.6 | 8 | 3.3 | 7 | 2.8 |
| How to teach creative writing | 64 | 26.0 | 147 | 59.8 | 24 | 9.8 | 11 | 4.5 |
| How to construct tests in English | 61 | 24.8 | 157 | 63.8 | 17 | 6.9 | 11 | 4.5 |
| How to teach developmental reading | 58 | 23.6 | 127 | 51.6 | 43 | 17.5 | 18 | 7.3 |
| How to teach the use of the library | 44 | 17.9 | 157 | 63.8 | 35 | 14.2 | 10 | 4.1 |
| How to teach mass media | 25 | 10.2 | 160 | 65.0 | 41 | 16.7 | 20 | 8.1 |
| How to teach speech | 25 | 10.2 | 136 | 55.3 | 59 | 24.0 | 26 | 10.6 |

Methods instructors stress classroom discussion in their own teaching (70.8 percent use discussion "often") and in teaching others to teach (56.9 percent give this "much" stress). Although 42.7 percent lecture often in their own classes, only 8.5 percent place much stress on using this method in the secondary school.

Receiving comparatively little emphases, apparently, are approaches related to "core" courses, courses articulated with other subjects, excursions, and community resources. The emphasis on aspects of English reported in this survey corresponds closely to that found in the Evans report, with literature, composition, and language and usage receiving most attention. In view of the insecurity which many teachers express with respect to the teaching of reading and speech, it is not surprising to discover that these topics receive comparatively little attention. Noticeable, too, is the fact that only 17.9 percent spend much time on the use of the library, only 10.2 percent spend much on the mass media, and only 28.8 percent spend much time on test construction in English.

• A question was also asked of all respondents to indicate the extent to which methods courses stress the needs of future teachers. Respondents were asked to indicate the emphasis they place on the different areas.

**Degree of Emphasis Placed on the Needs of Teachers**

| *Needs of Future Teachers* | *Much* | | *Some* | | *None* | | *No Answer* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* |
| Development of subject matter strength | 179 | 72.8 | 50 | 20.3 | 5 | 2.0 | 12 | 4.9 |
| Development of teaching techniques | 174 | 70.7 | 60 | 24.4 | 3 | 1.2 | 9 | 4.5 |
| Development of professional skills | 150 | 61.0 | 69 | 28.0 | 5 | 2.0 | 22 | 8.9 |
| Development of professional attitudes and ethics | 142 | 57.7 | 88 | 35.8 | 5 | 2.0 | 11 | 4.5 |
| Development of effective speech habits | 128 | 52.0 | 87 | 35.4 | 21 | 8.5 | 10 | 4.1 |
| Development of self-confidence | 122 | 49.6 | 95 | 38.6 | 19 | 7.7 | 10 | 4.1 |
| Development of poise | 105 | 42.7 | 105 | 42.7 | 24 | 9.8 | 12 | 4.9 |
| Development of energetic manner | 95 | 38.6 | 108 | 43.9 | 26 | 10.6 | 17 | 6.9 |
| Understanding of human development | 72 | 29.3 | 135 | 54.9 | 22 | 8.9 | 17 | 6.9 |
| Knowledge of community factors | 32 | 13.0 | 156 | 63.4 | 34 | 13.8 | 24 | 9.8 |

Clearly, strength in subject matter and teaching methodology seem of primary importance. When the respondents were asked if the above adequately represent their objectives in the English methods course, 190, or 77.2 percent, answered that they do; 16, or 6.5 percent, stated that they do not; and 40, or 16.3 percent, did not respond. Of the 16 who answered *No*, all but one stated his special objectives in words which seemed to rephrase the items. The one exception stated briefly that his objective was "to produce good English teachers."

• The course requirements for the work in methods were surveyed next.

The over-all uniformity of requirements is perhaps the most impressive finding here. More than three-quarters of such courses require the preparation of unit and lesson plans as well as professional reading and oral reports. Almost three-quarters (72.8 percent) require textbook analysis.

**Requirements in English Methods Courses**

| Requirements | Yes | | No | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Reading of professional materials | 232 | 94.3 | 5 | 2.0 | 9 | 3.7 |
| Submission of papers | 225 | 91.5 | 16 | 6.5 | 5 | 2.0 |
| Oral reports | 208 | 84.6 | 29 | 11.8 | 9 | 3.7 |
| Construction of a teaching unit | 206 | 83.7 | 29 | 11.8 | 11 | 4.5 |
| Construction of lesson plans | 197 | 80.1 | 29 | 11.8 | 20 | 8.1 |
| Evaluation of teaching materials | 197 | 80.1 | 30 | 12.2 | 19 | 7.7 |
| Evaluation of high school textbooks | 179 | 72.8 | 50 | 20.3 | 17 | 6.9 |
| Construction of tests | 171 | 69.5 | 47 | 19.1 | 28 | 11.4 |
| Teaching of a demonstration lesson | 166 | 67.5 | 59 | 24.0 | 21 | 8.5 |
| Student criticism of a demonstration lesson | 156 | 63.4 | 61 | 24.8 | 29 | 11.8 |
| Observations of high school classes | 140 | 56.9 | 83 | 33.7 | 23 | 9.3 |
| Discussion of observations of high school classes | 138 | 56.1 | 76 | 30.9 | 32 | 13.0 |
| Construction of a resource unit | 110 | 44.7 | 97 | 39.4 | 39 | 15.9 |
| Critiques of high school classes | 107 | 43.5 | 107 | 43.5 | 32 | 13.0 |

• When asked to indicate the methods of evaluation used in their own teaching, the methods instructors indicate that they place almost as much emphasis on class participation as on essay tests and written materials.

**Method of Evaluation Used in Methods Courses**

| Means of Evaluation | Much | | Some | | None | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Written materials | 159 | 64.6 | 73 | 29.7 | 2 | 0.8 | 12 | 4.9 |
| Essay tests | 146 | 59.3 | 75 | 30.5 | 10 | 41.1 | 15 | 6.1 |
| Class participation | 140 | 56.9 | 80 | 32.5 | 9 | 3.7 | 17 | 6.9 |
| Final examination | 96 | 39.0 | 123 | 50.0 | 9 | 3.7 | 18 | 7.3 |
| Observation | 83 | 33.7 | 99 | 40.2 | 26 | 10.6 | 38 | 15.4 |
| Oral reports | 74 | 30.1 | 119 | 48.4 | 24 | 9.8 | 29 | 11.8 |
| Self-evaluation | 54 | 22.0 | 85 | 34.6 | 67 | 28.2 | 40 | 16.3 |
| Self-made objective tests | 37 | 15.0 | 117 | 47.6 | 65 | 26.4 | 27 | 11.0 |
| Interview | 36 | 14.6 | 104 | 42.3 | 68 | 27.6 | 38 | 15.4 |
| Oral tests and quizzes | 23 | 9.3 | 97 | 39.4 | 83 | 33.7 | 43 | 17.5 |
| Standardized tests | 20 | 8.1 | 82 | 33.3 | 102 | 41.5 | 42 | 17.1 |
| Group evaluation | 18 | 7.3 | 89 | 36.2 | 96 | 39.0 | 43 | 17.5 |
| Psychological tests | 11 | 4.5 | 49 | 19.9 | 134 | 54.5 | 52 | 21.1 |
| Checklists | 5 | 2.0 | 73 | 29.7 | 117 | 47.6 | 51 | 20.7 |

• The methods instructors were also asked how much emphasis they place on recommending the fourteen approaches to evaluation to the future teachers in their classes. The results are summarized in the next

table. Clearly the methods of evaluation most widely used in the methods classes are also those which the instructors most widely recommend to their students.

**Methods of Evaluation Recommended to Future Teachers**

| *Means of Evaluation* | *Much* | | *Some* | | *None* | | *No Answer* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* | *No.* | *%* |
| Written materials | 159 | 64.6 | 48 | 19.5 | 0 | 0.0 | 39 | 15.9 |
| Essay tests | 135 | 54.9 | 74 | 30.1 | 2 | 0.8 | 35 | 14.2 |
| Class participation | 133 | 54.1 | 73 | 29.7 | 4 | 1.6 | 36 | 14.6 |
| Observation | 85 | 34.6 | 85 | 34.6 | 26 | 10.6 | 66 | 26.8 |
| Oral reports | 79 | 32.1 | 116 | 47.2 | 3 | 1.2 | 48 | 19.5 |
| Final examination | 73 | 29.7 | 124 | 50.4 | 5 | 2.0 | 44 | 17.9 |
| Self-made objective tests | 52 | 21.1 | 129 | 52.4 | 23 | 9.3 | 42 | 17.1 |
| Self-evaluation | 49 | 19.9 | 94 | 38.2 | 40 | 16.3 | 63 | 25.6 |
| Standardized tests | 42 | 17.1 | 136 | 55.3 | 22 | 8.9 | 46 | 18.7 |
| Interview | 39 | 15.9 | 110 | 44.7 | 40 | 16.3 | 57 | 23.2 |
| Oral tests and quizzes | 35 | 14.2 | 120 | 48.8 | 30 | 12.2 | 61 | 24.8 |
| Psychological tests | 21 | 8.5 | 98 | 39.8 | 63 | 25.6 | 64 | 26.0 |
| Group evaluation | 20 | 8.1 | 108 | 43.9 | 56 | 22.8 | 62 | 25.2 |
| Checklists | 9 | 3.7 | 91 | 37.0 | 73 | 29.7 | 73 | 29.7 |

Methods instructors were also asked to report on the use of texts and supplementary materials in their courses. The findings are similar to those of the Committee on the Secondary Methods Course which indicate that two textbooks tend to be more widely used than others. Although the total numbers of users of certain texts are different in the two reports, the percentages do not vary more than a few points. Whereas the Evans report found that the two texts accounted for 41 percent of all texts used, this writer found that the figure was 49.6 percent. The data on supplementary materials also duplicate the committee's data.[2]

## Summary

This report on the characteristics of the methods course for secondary teachers of English suggests that the course tends to be offered by a professional appointee in a department of English (perhaps with a joint appointment in education). The instructor, who probably has his doctoral degree, normally has had experience in teaching at the secondary level. In most cases the instructor will supervise the student teaching of the

[2]See report on page 10.

beginning teacher or at least see that the methods course is closely related to student teaching. The methods course will stress literature, language, and composition and will direct comparatively little attention to the teaching of reading and speech and the mass media. In all probability, students will be required to read one or two popular textbooks in this field and will be evaluated by their participation in class, as well as by written materials and essay tests.

## PART III

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

**Recommendation No. 1: A course in the methods of teaching English should be an integral part of the professional sequence for English majors preparing to teach and should be required of all students who will be certified to teach English.**

The importance of fusing scholarship and pedagogy has been recognized and underscored by several groups: the eighty college and university English chairmen who met at Allerton Park, December 2-4, 1962; the Executive Committee of the College Section of NCTE and of the Conference on College Composition and Communication which adopted such a resolution on December 26, 1962; the membership of NCTE which, at the Annual Business Meeting on November 28, 1963, passed a resolution calling for such a requirement. Finally, it is confirmed by survey after survey of practicing teachers who agree that, apart from practice teaching, a practical course in English methods taught by a qualified instructor is the most valuable single course in the entire professional sequence.

**Recommendation No. 2: Students enrolling in courses on methods of teaching English should come to such courses with adequate backgrounds in rhetoric and composition, in the history and structure of the English language, in literary history, criticism, and genres.**

No methods course can fuse scholarship and pedagogy when the background in scholarship is inadequate. The student, for example, who does not know grammar, traditional or modern, is in a poor position to relate this subject matter to problems of teaching. The instructor in a two- or three-hour course in methods who must divert attention to compensate for gaps in essential subject matter preparation cannot make the unique contribution that he can when his students have strong academic preparation in those areas and skills for which secondary school teachers of English are responsible.

**Recommendation No. 3: The instructor in the methods course should have unquestioned command of the subject matter with extensive experience in teaching in secondary schools and in working with teachers at this level.**

All the efforts to improve the academic preparation of teachers at any level stem from the conviction that the teacher must have mastered the subject matter which he teaches. The methods course demands dual competence of the instructor. The instructor himself must have mastered the two areas for which he is responsible: the content and the teaching of English. In candid assessment of their own programs, several respondents to the survey, reported in Part I, stated that the value of their own course was diminished by their lack of sufficient firsthand experience in schools.

**Recommendation No. 4: Instructors in the methods course, however extensive their past experience in schools, should maintain close and continuous working relations with schools.**

In William Evans' study, only four percent of the respondents report that "a strong, even primary, interest in the teaching of high school English" either makes no difference or is not desirable. Michael Cardone reports that, while 54.1 percent of the methods instructors supervise student teachers in English, 75.1 percent feel that such instructors *should* supervise student teachers. Those directing programs in teacher education and making staff assignments should seek all feasible ways to enable methods instructors to supervise the work of student teachers, both by arranging for compensatory time and by making certain that effective supervision contributes as much to professional advancement as does effective teaching. Instructors who do not supervise their own students, or who teach methods courses which are not concurrent with student teaching, should arrange for follow-up meetings with their students after the practice teaching is completed. Where such steps are not feasible, it is all the more important to encourage such instructors to find other opportunities to engage in immediate contact with schools through workshops, cooperative research projects, and similar activities.

**Recommendation No. 5: Departments of English and education should seek ways to increase rapport between the two disciplines and to improve communication between and within these departments.**

The two studies reveal the confused relationships between the two departments by the fact that although 27.6 percent of the instructors hold their appointments solely in schools of education, 50 percent of them teach their methods courses in schools of education. Although 24 percent of the courses are taught as joint offerings of English and education, only 17.9 percent of the instructors hold

joint appointments. In short, there is a clear tendency for English departments to assign the instructor but not to offer the course. The problem is made more dramatic in the comments of the instructors themselves. Some see in English departments little evidence of support for their work. Others teach specialized methods courses which are preceded by requirements in "general methods" that at times duplicate some of the work of the specialized courses but do little to stimulate students to continue their study of methods of teaching. Apparently many instructors are employed by English departments to teach the course but are prevented by the demands of the assignment from engaging in those activities which alone insure promotion.

## Conclusion

The two studies and the various resolutions reported in this publication raise some crucial questions. How can a course in English methods be offered at institutions not offering such a course? How can future English teachers be counseled and screened more carefully before they enter the English methods course? How can weaknesses in subject matter be strengthened before students enter the course? How can courses in such neglected areas as advanced composition, world literature, literary criticism, literature for adolescents, literary genres, contemporary literature, the history of the English language, and grammar based on recent linguistic principles be made a part of this background? To what extent should the subject matter of these neglected areas be taught in the English methods course? In view of the individual needs of the students, the spiraling demands of the profession, the changing conditions in the teaching of English in the secondary schools, and the fact that the English methods course is after all only one course, what content and how much content are best for the course at any one time?

Many of these questions must be answered with full knowledge of conditions unique at the institutions where the questions are raised. A small college may not find it easy to make changes which a large university can make. There are also conditions which are quite apart from the size of an institution. One question, however, is apparently so basic at some institutions that it must be answered with some satisfaction before other questions can be approached hopefully. This concerns itself with the degree and the spirit of dedication and cooperation that can be expected both within and between departments of English and departments of education.

Eighty English chairmen have resolved that, whenever possible, teachers of English education should hold appointments in English departments. This resolution is a hopeful sign, because it indicates an increasing interest on the part of English departments to engage actively in strengthening the teaching of English in the secondary schools. Colleges of education, also showing an increasing interest in the teaching of academic subjects, are actively engaged in a search for specialists in English education. This is also a hopeful sign. It is likely that answers to questions in this publication will not come mainly through placing a specialist in English education in a certain department on campus. Wherever situated, appointments in English education must aspire to be scholarly, academically sound, and realistically oriented for the student who wants to teach English in the secondary schools.

Departments can provide only the climate for excellence in English education; the real strength of appointments in this field must come from the persons holding the appointments. No institution can afford to have English methods taught by an education professor who knows little or nothing about English or the teaching of English. No institution can afford to have English methods taught by an English professor who is not truly interested in teaching the course and has no teaching experience or continuing interest in the teaching of English in the secondary schools. It seems appropriate here to include some remarks made by Dora V. Smith during the 1963 Conference on English Education at Bloomington, Indiana:

> What matters most, it seems to me, is that we should keep the qualifications for the position high.
>
> 1. The person offering the course in English methods should be more thoroughly prepared in English than the English majors he is teaching. Although this seems a modest proposal, the requirement is not always adhered to in the colleges of this country.
> 2. He should have qualified both in English and in professional education for the certificate for which he is preparing his students.
> 3. He should have taught English in high school a goodly number of years so that he may understand thoroughly the problems of prospective teachers.
> 4. Since he is the college or university's contact man or woman with the public schools, he should have kept close to those

> who are teaching in the high schools of his state and he should have attended their state and local meetings regularly. In short, he should be intimately related to the teaching of English in the high schools which his students will serve.[1]

Persons with the above qualifications will know best what to do about the problems and questions raised by the data and the resolutions in this publication. English education must assume more responsibility for preparing such persons. Charged with the responsibility for answering these questions today, present specialists in English education must seek ways of working closely with persons from various departments in their institutions and with persons responsible for the teaching of English in the public, independent, and parochial schools in their states and local communities.

Themes at the 1964 Conference on English Education carry proof that specialists in English education from both colleges of education and English departments are thinking alike, are eager to look at problems squarely, and are convinced that through cooperative effort they can go far beyond drafting resolutions. It is indeed encouraging to see that persons with various kinds of appointments in English education have at the second national *Conference on English Education* addressed themselves to such topics as "English Education as a Scholarly Discipline," "What Concepts or Structures Should Be Taught?" "English, Speech, and the Language Arts: Disorder and Latter Day Sorrow," "New Developments with Implications for Teacher Education Programs," and "Does the New English Require a New English Education?" These topics face issues squarely, and they are sincerely aimed at improving the quality of English instruction in the schools.

---

[1]Dora V. Smith, "Comments and Reactions," *English Education Today*, edited by Dwight L. Burton (Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963), pp. 72-73.

# INDEX


A

Administrative experience of instructors: 15

C

Cardone, Michael J.: 2, 13, 28

Characteristics of methods courses: 18-26
- Course requirements: 23-25
- English teacher skills: 21-22
- Method of evaluation recommended to future teachers: 25
- Prerequisite grade average: 18
- Special areas of content: 21
- Special methods in class: 20

Committee on the Secondary Methods Course: 2, 3, 13

Conference on College Composition and Communication: 27

Conference on English Education
- 1963: 13
- 1964: 31

Criticism and genres: 27

E

*Education of Teachers of English for American Schools and Colleges, The:* 1

English education: 28-30

English methods: 3-4, 27
- Instructors' assessment of and recommendations for improving course: 20-25
- Students taking course: 9, 27
- Text and materials: 10
- Title and content of course: 9-11, 21

Evans, William H.: 3, 13, 19, 28

H

History and structure of the English language: 27, 29

I

Instructors: 4, 28
- Academic background: 5, 6
- Contact with secondary school: 7, 9, 14, 28
- Professional activities and affiliations: 4, 7, 8
- Professional experience: 4, 8, 9, 14
- Professional publications: 4, 9

L

Literary history: 27

M

Methods courses
- Characteristics of: 18-26
- Status of: 1

N

National Council of Teachers of English: 1, 15-16

*National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English, The:* 1

*National Interest and the Teaching of English, The:* 1, 6

Neglected areas in training of instructors: 6

P

*Patterson's American Education:* 3

R

Recommendations for action: 27-29

Relationship of methods course to student teaching: 16-17

Required background for instructor: 27-28

Required background for student: 27

Rhetoric and composition: 27

S

Secondary methods course: 2, 13

Smith, Dora V.: 13, 30